

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SCCT-02 ACDA-19 DRC-01 AID-20

SAM-01 /158 W

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P R 141412Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5642

USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1672

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

UNCLAS ANKARA 6533

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR TU CY GR

SUBJ: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM ECEVIT

PRESS CONFERENCE 2000 LOCAL TIME

REF: ANKARA 6526

FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY'S UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF
Q'S AND A'S FROM REFERENCED ECEVIT PRESS CONFERENCE:

1. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN ANY CLASH
WITH BRITISH OR UN TROOPS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE OPERATION,
ECEVIT STATED THAT NO REPORT HAS BEEN RECEIVED ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. ECEVIT EXPLAINED THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL TARGETS OF
THE OPERATION ARE AS FOLLOWS: "FIRST OF ALL THIS OPERATION HAS NO
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OBJECTIVE TO INVADE THE ISLAND, TO ANNEX THE ISLAND TO TURKEY OR

TO UPSET THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE ISLAND. AND ABOUT ALL, WE WANT TO ESTABLISH THE INTEGRITY OF THE ISLAND ON FIRMER FOUNDATIONS; PROVIDE THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS, WHOSE HOPES AND SECURITY ARE DEPENDENT ON TURKEY WITH THE FREEDOM WHICH THEY AMPLY DESERVE; AND BRING AN END TO THEIR LONG YEARS OF SUFFERINGS AND MISERY."

2. JOURNALIST REMINDED ECEVIT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OPPOSED TURKEY IN THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AND TURKEY'S CYPRUS OPERATION IN GENERAL AND ASKED THE OPINIONS OF ECEVIT ON BRITISH AND USSR ATTITUDES. ECEVIT SAID : "I DON'T WANT TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF BRITISH GOVERNMENT, BUT I CANNOT REFRAIN FROM EXPRESSING MY REGRET ON THIS OCCASION. IF ENGLAND HAD ACCEPTED OUR PROPOSAL WHEN I WENT THERE AND PERSONALLY APPROACHED THEM FOR AN UNIFIED ACTION AS TWO GUARANTOR COUNTRIES BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE OPERATION TO SAVE CYPRUS FROM THE RUIN IT SUFFERED, THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY NEED TO RESORT TO A SOLUTION THAT ALSO IS PAINFUL FOR ENGLAND. THERE IS REACTION FROM USSR THAT MAY BE CAUSE REGRET. AS I HAVE STATED EARLIER, WE WILL SHOW SPECIAL CARE TO PROTECT THE ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE IN THE WORLD, AND PARTICULARLY IN OUR REGION, DURING OUR CYPRUS OPERATION AS WELL AS IN FUTURE ATTEMPTS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS ISSUE."

4. ANOTHER JOURNALIST ASKED WHETHER TURKEY WILL ACCEPT THE BRITISH ACTION PUTTING ITS TROOPS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE. ECEVIT SAID: "ON THIS SUBJECT THERE ARE MANY QUESTION MARKS IN YOUR MIND AS WELL AS MINE. HOWEVER, FOR THE TIME BEING I PREFER NOT TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS. I WANT TO LEAVE BEHIND WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST. I HOPE THAT LESSONS WILL BE LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST ON HOW THE UN CAN CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES IN THE BEST MANNER, NOT ONLY IN CYPRUS BUT ALSO IN OTHER COUNTRIES."

5. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION ON WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN VIEW OF CONCENTRATION OF TROOPS BY GREECE ALONG TURKISH BORDERS AND IN THE EVENT GREECE STARTS A MILITARY OPERATION AGAINST TURKEY, ECEVIT SAID: "SINCE THERE IS NO INDICATION OF SUCH AN ACTION, I CANNOT COMMENT ON THIS SUBJECT. WE SHOWED GREAT CARE AT THE BEGINNING OF AND DURING THE OPERATION TO LAY THE FOUNDA-
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TIONS OF A SOUND TURKISH-GREEK FRIENDSHIP. I DON'T WANT TO THINK OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A CLASH BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE-OUR ALLY, NEIGHBOR AND FOR WHOM WE STILL MAINTAIN THE HOPE OF BEING OUR FRIEND."

6. IN ANSWER TO ANOTHER QUESTION ECEVIT SAID REPORTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED THAT GREEK CYPRIOTS WERE ABANDONING NICOSIA AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE OPERATION OF TURKISH ARMED FORCES

THIS MORNING."

7. ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS THE POSSIBILITY OF A GREEK AND BRITISH OPERATION AND WHETHER HE HAS DECIDED TO COUNTER SUCH AN OPERATION, ECEVIT GAVE THE FOLLOWING ANSWER: "I DON'T WANT TO DISCUSS ASSUMPTIONS. AS A MATTER OF FACT WE HAVE MADE THE NECESSARY WARNINGS FOR SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT TO KEEP CLEAR OF CYPRUS. WE DID THE SAME THING LAST TIME. THIS DERIVES FROM OUR CONCERN NOT TO HARM ANY SHIP OR AIRCRAFT UNINTENTIONALLY. IF ALL COUNTRIES PAY HEED TO THIS GOOD-WILLED WARNING, SUCH A POSSIBILITY WILL NOT OCCUR."

8. ECEVIT STATED THAT THE LATEST SITUATION IN CYPRUS WILL BE DISCLOSED BY TGS. HE SAID THAT TURKISH UNITS WERE ADVANCING RAPIDLY AND ADDED "THE AREAS WHICH WERE MINED AND THE AREAS WHICH WERE MOST DIFFICULT TO ADVANCE IN HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND PRACTICALLY EVERYWHERE. I WAS AT TGS A SHORT WHILE AGO AND THERE WAS NO REPORT OF LOSS OF AIRCRAFT OR TANKS. AS FAR AS I KNOW, NICOSIA AIRPORT WHICH IS IN THE CONTROL OF UN FORCES HAS NOT BEEN BOMBED. THE NEWS MAY HAVE DERIVED FROM THE BOMBING OF ADJACENT MILITARY TARGETS."

9. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF ENGLAND INTERVENES IN THE CAPACITY OF A GUARANTOR COUNTRY, ECEVIT SAID: "I BELIEVE THAT ENGLAND IS CONCERNED AS MUCH AS WE ARE ABOUT MAINTAINING THE POWER, EFFECTIVENESS AND UNITY OF NATO IN OUR REGION. AND I BELIEVE THAT IT WILL NOT LEAD TO SUCH A POSSIBILITY."

10. TO THE QUESTION ON DURATION OF THE OPERATION, ECEVIT SAID: "I BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE VERY BRIEF."
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ANKARA06533
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740223-0369
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740850/aaaabqhj.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ANKARA 6526
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 MAR 2002 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <23 JAN 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM ECEVIT PRESS CONFERENCE 2000 LOCAL TIME
TAGS: PFOR, TU, CY, GR, (ECEVIT, BULENT)
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005